

## Grief & Loss

### Emotional Reactions

- Anger
- Fear
- Extreme sadness
- Loneliness
- Detachment/Lack of emotional response

### Physical Reactions

- Difficulty sleeping or sleeping too much
- Unintentional changes in eating habits
- Significant and unintentional weight loss or weight gain
- Increased susceptibility to illness

### Behavioral Reactions

- Lack of motivation for daily activities
- Lack of concentration or memory
- Increased irritability
- Unpredictable, uncontrollable bouts of crying or screaming
- Panic/anxiety attacks
- Wanting to talk about the deceased
- Worrying about talking about the deceased too much
- Increased use of alcohol, prescription drugs, or street drugs to help you cope
- Fast of reckless driving/behavior

### Suggestions For Coping With Grief

- Keep decision making to a minimum
- Accept help and support when offered
- Seek support and assistance from others
- Talk and tell others how you are feeling
- Try to get adequate rest
- Try to maintain good nutrition
- Keep a journal to understand what you are feeling
- Remember that it is okay to feel depressed
- Remember that it is okay to cry
- Be patient with yourself, healing takes time

## Who Can Help?

The Casper Police Department's Victim Services Unit can assist you with information regarding your case status, Victims' Rights, navigation of the criminal justice system and referrals to the appropriate community helping professionals or organizations according to your specific needs.

## Benefits of Counseling

Some of the benefits of seeking counseling are:

- Counseling can help develop coping skills and strategies—allowing for the continuance of school, play, and relationships.
- Establishment of a support network can help to decrease the negative physical, psychological and emotional effects that often result from grief.

## Resources

### **Central Wyoming Counseling Center**

[www.cwcc.us](http://www.cwcc.us)  
1-307-237-9583

### **Transitions Family Counseling & Mediation**

1-307-265-2555

### **Highland Park Community Church Healing place**

[www.hpcc.church/HealingPlace](http://www.hpcc.church/HealingPlace)  
1-307-265-3977



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## **Grief and Loss**



**Victim Services Unit  
201 N David, First Floor  
Casper, WY 82601  
307-235-8347**

**Case Number:**

**Detective:**

**Victim Advocate:**

## **What is Grief?**

Grief is the normal response of sorrow, emotion, and confusion that comes from losing someone or something important to you.

It is a natural part of life. Grief is a typical reaction to death, divorce, job loss, a move away from family and friends, or loss of good health due to illness.

## **How Does Grief Feel?**

- Just after a death or loss, you may feel empty and numb, as if you are in shock.
- You may notice physical changes such as trembling, nausea, trouble breathing, muscle weakness, dry mouth, or trouble sleeping and eating.
- You may become angry—at a situation, a particular person, or just angry in general.
- Almost everyone in grief also experiences guilt. Guilt is often expressed as “I could have, I should have, and I wish I would have” statements.
- People in grief may have strange dreams or nightmares, be absent-minded, withdraw socially, or lack the desire to return to work.

While these feelings and behaviors are normal during grief, they will pass.

## **How long does grief last?**

- Grief lasts as long as it takes you to accept and learn to live with your loss. For some people, grief lasts a few months. For others, grieving may take years.
- The length of time spent grieving is different for each person. There are many reasons for the differences, including personality, health, coping style, culture, family background, and life experiences. The time spent grieving also depends on your relationship with the person lost and how prepared you were for the loss.

## **How will I know when I'm done grieving?**

Every person who experiences a death or other loss must complete a four-step grieving process:

- 1) Accept the loss.
- 2) Work through and feel the physical and emotional pain of grief.
- 3) Adjust to living in a world without the person or item lost.
- 4) Move on with life.

The grieving process is over only when a person completes the four steps.

## **What if these feelings won't go away?**

- If you recently experienced a death or other loss, feelings of grief are part of a normal reaction.
- However, if these feelings persist with no lifting mood, ask for help.

## **How does grief differ from depression?**

Depression is more than a feeling of grief after losing someone or something you love. Clinical depression is a whole body disorder. It can take over the way you think and feel.

Symptoms of depression include:

- A sad, anxious, or “empty” mood that won't go away
- Loss of interest in what you used to enjoy.
- Low energy, fatigue, feeling “slowed down”
- Changes in sleep patterns
- Loss of appetite, weight loss, or weight gain
- Trouble concentrating, remembering, or making decisions
- Feeling hopeless or gloomy
- Feeling guilty, worthless, or helpless
- Thoughts of death or suicide or a suicide attempt
- Recurring aches and pains that don't respond to treatment.